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ABSTRACT

The School of Education and the Department of Continuing Education at the University of Virginia have jointly developed and implemented a Master of Education program, in elementary education, which is conducted on-site in three regions: Appalachia, rural southside Virginia, and northern Virginia. The field-based program was centralized into a single set of course offerings and a single program of study, guided by specific objectives which were determined with the cooperation of the local school districts in which the program operates. The 2-year course offers instruction to a cohort of no less than 60 elementary school teachers who meet with a team, drawn from the University faculty, on Friday evenings and Saturday mornings. An integral part of the program is two 6-week summer school sessions which feature clinical experience in a laboratory school. An outline of the course content and the activities of the academic year are included in this description of the program. (JD)

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A PROGRAM MODEL
OF
FIELD-BASED GRADUATE STUDY
IN
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

A paper presented at the Association of Teacher Educators

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Orlando, Florida
January 29-February 3, 1983

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Public education in the Commonwealth of Virginia experienced many turbulent events during the decade of the 1960's. Civil rights in conflict, desegregation and the closing of the public schools presented challenges to the educational system that had never before been encountered. By 1970, Virginia's political leadership struggled to reconstruct a system of elementary, secondary and higher education that would eliminate the vestiges of segregation, improve student performances on standardized tests, improve the financial base of support for all educational levels and improve in some significant way the preparation of classroom teachers. On the basis of fiscal support for education, Virginia, for a long time, had ranked in the lowest decile of all the states. Student achievement scores on standardized tests reflected similar national ranking. Racial integration of student populations, faculties and school administrations presented persistent challenges for the General Assembly and the State Department of Public Instruction. Similar issues brought the challenge of reform to higher education.

In 1971, the General Assembly and the State Council on Higher Education (SCHEV) initiated a series of provisions to reform the higher education system; all in an apparent effort to improve public education in general. Specifically, the SCHEV developed a plan of higher education based upon a two-tiered system of colleges and universities. Two universities, the University of Virginia and Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, were designated as comprehensive state universities. Although the specific mandates were surprisingly ambiguous, the comprehensive state universities had statewide responsibilities for the design and delivery of educational programs. All colleges and universities were assigned to consortium regions of the state with UVA and VPISU holding membership in all consortia.[1]

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[1] Technically, UVA and VPISU were members of all consortia, but membership in the Capital (Richmond) consortium has been effectively blocked.

Colleges and Universities acting in consort held primacy over educational programming on their respective campuses. The growing school population, the demand for classroom teachers and the challenges of a reformed system of public schools generated heavy demand for graduate degrees in education. The comprehensive universities, once the primary centers of graduate professional education in the state, experienced expanding competition by regional universities and colleges as they initiated numerous graduate programs. The SCHEV consortium organization was an attempt to bring central planning to graduate education--to eliminate program duplication. There were, however, several segments of the rural consortium areas where local school divisions (LEAs) did not have immediate access to campus-based graduate study.

At about the same time, the General Assembly acted to stimulate elementary and secondary education throughout the state. Basically, the legislature created a program of standards of quality (SOQ); standards governing the financial base curriculum goals and instructional qualities of public schools. One of the prime standards was the mandate that each LEA had to maintain an instructional staff of which at least 23% held master's or advanced degrees. Until the SOQ were enacted, the professional standards of the faculties between the well-financed and poorly-financed school divisions had been markedly diverse. The SOQ contained directives to close or eliminate that deficiency or school divisions would risk the loss of state revenues. Immediately, LEAs with faculties grossly deficient in graduate degrees sought the help of graduate institutions to eliminate the deficiencies. Most of these requests came from LEAs in the most isolated parts of Virginia (Appalachia)where teachers inservice was a minimum of three hours from higher education institutions granting graduate degrees. Furthermore, the degree deficiencies were found largely in elementary schools populated by females whose second income was essential to rural families. The two comprehensive institutions

were called upon to design and deliver inservice, graduate degree programs that could be delivered on-site in isolated regions of the state.

Developing The UVA Response

Within the University of Virginia, professional schools hold an unusually high degree of autonomy. Graduate programs are essentially under the control of the Dean and faculty of the school subject only to oversight by the University Senate. At the same time, the delivery of professional courses and certificate programs away from the University grounds is exclusively the jurisdiction of the Division of Continuing Education (DCE)[2] through its network of seven regional centers. Thus, any response that the School of Education (SE) chose to make to the requests of LEAs for field-based graduate study had to be developed and delivered within the context of DCE values and restraints. Likewise, the DCE, primarily involved in the delivery of discrete courses to select client populations, could not design and deliver graduate degree programs without the support and cooperation of the SE. The third element in the field-based, graduate program had to be the leadership of the LEAs who expected the program to provide a constructive influence in their schools. Cooperation and interest from all three parties was essential to produce a quality, effective graduate program in elementary education.

The LEA

Requests for on-site, graduate elementary education programs were initiated by superintendents who were agressively pursuing curriculum/instruction development in their elementary schools. They made the request with the understanding

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[2] The Division of Continuing Education was the School of Continuing Education at the time of these negotiations. The name was changed to reflect the administrative function of the Division.

that graduate degrees were under the program control of the SE faculty, but at the same time they agressively pursued the notion that a field-based masters of education degree should be concomitant with their curriculum goals. In an early case, for example, the elementary school leaders had adopted the SCIS curriculum in science, and, the superintendent wished our program faculty to emphasize the teaching of SCIS materials at the expense of other science approaches. Quite obviously, the LEA administrators acted from self-interest. They wanted to avoid potential philosophical conflicts generated by differences between the graduate program (theory and principle) and locally adopted practice. After all, the program clients (teachers) were indirectly supplied (recruited) from their faculties, and, the LEA budget would ultimately absorb the cost of a larger number of graduate degrees among the faculty.

The Division of Continuing Education

The mission of the DCE is to provide the needs assessment, program development and administrative support for the delivery of University courses, programs and degrees away from the Grounds of the University.[3] As such, the DCE 7-center network is necessarily sensitive to the needs of its clients, which, in the case of graduate degree programs, might be divided between the enrolled teachers and the LEA administration. Funding for the DCE is derived from tuition (70%) and State general fund appropriation (30%), which is awarded on an FTE-based formula. Because of the 70/30 funding ratio, the DCE administration must emphasize cost effectiveness as a value equal to academic quality. The position of Director of Field Services was recently established to provide liaison between the SE and

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[3] Grounds refers to the campus of the University of Virginia.

and DCE. The position is filled with a tenured faculty member of the SE who receives 62% of his 12-months' support from the DCE and 38% support from the SE. He is housed in the SE to assure a close working relationship with the SE faculty.

Although, by mission, the Division of Continuing Education is designated as the fiscal agent for the development and delivery of field-based master of education (M.Ed.) programs, the history of the unit also makes it emminently qualifed for this task. Since 1915, citizens of the Commonwealth have requested faculty to teach courses, participate in programs and provide a variety of instructional services in the various localities. A dramatic increase in the demand for these services from many of the schools and the College of the University, in addition to the School of Education, led to the establishment of regional centers in Charlottesville, Richmond, Falls Church, Virginia Beach, Lynchburg, Roanoke and Abingdon. The advent of the regional center network with a Director and other staff at each location made it possible to provide registration, advising and a continuing long term relationship between the Center Directors and local School Superintendents. In many instances, annual needs assessments were conducted for a school division by a University team consisting of University faculty and field-based continuing education staff. This process, because it reflects the instructional and professional development needs of a school on a system-wide basis from custodian and bus driver to teacher and administrator, enabled the Division of Continuing Education to develop, with the faculty, new courses and services that are tailored to the specific needs of a specific school division. Thus, the trust, knowledge and integrity that has developed historically between an on-site center of the University and the local schools provides an excellent foundation of relationships and resources for the initiation of an Off-Grounds degree program.

The School of Education

The University of Virginia and subsequently its professional schools respond to the standard values--credit hour generation and program productivity. Complex state funding formula vary according to the professional or academic activity and ultimately determine staffing, instructional support and physical space. Faculty, generally aware of the values inherent in the formulas, maintain constant concern for credit hour production, scholarship and tenure. Faculty rewards in professional schools--promotion, salary and released time--are not typically produced by activities in field service. While the University system encourages faculty to consult with LEAs as demonstration of the mission of a comprehensive university, such activities are typically rewarded as individual initiative. Those faculty willing to work within a completely inservice graduate program might consequently be more motivated to contract with the DCE for an overload course. In that case, a field-based degree program would become ten courses individually caught that would summatively constitute a graduate degree. In all likelihood these ten courses would have been delivered in a sequence primarily determined by faculty availability rather than client needs.

Professional schools and their faculties jealously guard the quality standards (or at least the image) of their programs. Faculty approval of a field-based M.Ed. program in elementary education was fully dependent upon the guaranteed delivery of a program equivalent in quality to that offered on Grounds. Excessive influence by the LEAs or the DCE over program substance would have quickly eliminated the potential for a successful field effort.

Development of the Initial Effort

Requests for an off-grounds M.Ed. program in elementary education became particularly intense during the latter months of 1972. DCE regional centers were

particularly sensitized to these requests and channeled them through the DCE to the SE. DCE and SE representatives met regularly during those months to create an effective administrative structure through which the requested services could be delivered. During that period, departmental faculty met and agreed that they were committed to the concept of quality graduate degree programs delivered entirely off-grounds under specific conditions:

- Resident on-Grounds faculty would staff the off-grounds degree programs
- faculty assigned off-grounds would hold equivalent status with faculty assigned on-grounds
- program control would remain with the resident program faculty in the department where the degree program originated.
- the LEAs employing the client teachers would make some contribution to program support (space, released time and/or materials)

These faculty concerns were reviewed and confirmed by the SE and university governance system. After considerable negotiations, the DCE accepted these guiding principles and agreed to serve as the administrative arm of the program—to provide management, student recruitment and site development for instructional delivery.

During the Spring, 1973, program faculty in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction initiated deliberations to design a thirty (30) semester hour M.Ed. program in elementary education--a program that was to be delivered entirely at a site over five hours travel from the Grounds. At the time, the M.Ed. on-grounds might be characterized as follows:

- (3 s.h.) social foundations of education
- (3 s.h.) psychological foundations of education
- (3 s.h.) curriculum course
- (6 s.h.) reading/reading diagnostics/language arts in elementary school
- (3 s.h.) math/science/social studies in elementary school
- (3 s.h.) seminar/readings in elementary education
- (3 s.h.) counseling/supervision
- (3 s.h.) exceptional child/special education
- (3 s.h.) open elective

Typical of most universities, graduate students could select courses from a smorgasbord of courses taught by individual professors with varied philosophies of elementary education and in a sequence of their own choosing or course availability. In fact, the M.Ed. program of study on-grounds is structured primarily by the advisor-advisee relationship. Every graduate student in the M.Ed. program has a massive university library system at his/her disposal including a select professional library within the SE. Likewise, graduate students have access to superb computer capacities. They have only limited access to children since the SE does not operate a laboratory school. Experimental and/or demonstration work with children typically occurs within scheduled internships or through special arrangement with the local public schools.

Obviously there was no way that the SE and DCE could deliver an M.Ed. degree in the field that offered the course variety to be found on-grounds within the constraints of a reasonable cost analysis. Departmental faculty quickly determined that a field-based M.Ed. program had to be centralized into a single set of course offerings; a single program of study. Individualization, a highly prized value, had to be accomodated within the prescribed program.

The lack of central library facilities in the field was another major conern. Reproduction of selected periodicals, a variety of textbooks and local library facilities could offset the problem to some degree, but this deficiency could not be entirely eliminated. Offsetting this deficiency in the minds of the program planners was the opportunity to maximize educational theory and practice through experimentation and demonstration teaching in a laboratory setting. Since most practicing teachers seldom have the opportunity to observe their colleagues or other models in the act of teaching or to receive critiques of their own teaching or to work in teaching teams, a laboratory school was envisioned early as an essential part of a field-based M.Ed. program in elementary education.

The highly generalized scope and sequence of the on-grounds M.Ed. degree required that the SE catalogue description refer to the degree in broad goal statements. The off-grounds program required more specific objectives to guide the more highly structured instructional program. The program objectives had to be based upon considerations for the:

- standards of quality mandates for the certification and recertification of elementary teachers
- standards stated or inherent in the on-grounds M.Ed. program
- professional standards for the elementary educator

In carrying the M.Ed. program to the field, it was of primary importance that program objectives rather than the philosophy of individual faculty guide the instructional program. Faculty, as individuals, frequently reflect a particular philosophical bias in elementary education--e.g. look-say reading--a bias that a field-based program could not afford where student choices were restricted. The program objectives reflected the following:

- Knowledge of alternative theories of child development and demonstrated ability to diagnose developmental characteristics of young children.
- Knowledge of alternative theories and practices of elementary schooling and demonstrated ability to organize instruction around selected principles.
- Knowledge of alternative curriculum/instruction programs in the elementary disciplines--mathematics, social studies, science, language arts, music, art, children's literature and reading--and demonstrated ability to implement selected programs.
- Knowledge of alternative curriculum theories and designs and demonstrated ability to relate that knowledge to stages of child development and classroom instruction.
- Knowledge of diagnostic processes with demonstrated ability to diagnose reading/math skill deficiencies and prescribe remedial instruction.

- Knowledge of procedures for individualized instruction, team teaching, open education and interdisciplinary planning and demonstrated ability to provide integrated instructional experiences for children in a laboratory school.

Based upon these objectives, the planning committee designed the first Off-Grounds degree in elementary education. The program design was shaped and modified during the first two-year cycle (1973-75). With limited modification, the same program continues to be utilized after implementation at eight different sites. The general program description follows:

Academic Year I (September/May)

Course Experiences	Instructional Hours	
3 s.h. Language Arts Elementary School	24	
Children's Literature	18	Language Content
Arl Elementary School	18	Bloc
3 s.h. Foundations Reading Instruction	24	
3 s.h. Psychological Foundations	24	Foundations
Curriculum: Elementary School	12	Bloc

Description: The planning committee believed that the interrelatedness of the four areas--reading, children's literature, language arts and art--permitted compression of the instructional time into a 6 s.h. bloc. Retaining discrete instructional modules helped to explain the content of the program and the traditional titles provided the best descriptions for state certification analysts.

Curriculum questions and issues were the unifying thread running over both years of the program. Questions in the first year related curriculum foundations to psychological foundations--human growth, educatioanl psychology and tests and measurements.

Summer Session I (Six Weeks)

Course Experiences	Instructional Hours
3 s.h. Disgnostic Testing Reading	25
3 s.h. Seminar Elementary Education	15
Curriculum: Elementary School	10
Practicum	75

Description: The first week of the summer session is designed as a reading clinic where faculty conduct demonstrations in reading diagnostics with local children. Later that week each teacher conducts clinical testing of 4-5 children under the supervision of clinic faculty. Each teacher prescribes a program of reading activities for each child for the summer laboratory school. They also maintain and monitor the progress of those students.

For the next five weeks, the teachers are assigned to either K-3 or 4-7 grade level teaching teams—each team consisting of 6-7 teachers and 25-30 children. The teaching teams plan, organize and teach an integrated program of language arts and art from 8:30-11:30 a.m. each day. The faculty in residence--normally the same faculty who taught during the academic year--conduct teaching demonstrations, observe teachers in action and provide critiques and supervise teacher planning sessions. Between 11:30-2:00, the teacher teams are available for small and large group instruction, informal luncheon discussions and/or presentation of model approaches in elementary teaching.

Academic Year II (September/May)

Course Experiences	Instructional Hours	
3 s.h. Science Elementary School	24	Content Bloc
Music Elementary School	18	
Social Studies Elementary School	18	
3 s.h. Mathematics Elementary School	24	
3 s.h. Social Foundations	24	Foundations Bloc
Curriculum: Elementary School	12	

Description: The planning committee believed that language skills studied in the first year and the mathematics skills emphasis of the second year provided the basis for the integration of these skills under the conceptual framework of social studies, science and music. The thrust of this content bloc is to promote interdisciplinary curriculum planning, core concept organization, open education and individualized teaching.

Social foundations--history, sociology and philosophy of education--provide building concepts for alternative organizations of elementary schools. Curriculum issues are continued as the common thread for the two-year cycle.

Summer Session II (Six Weeks)

Course Experiences	Instructional Hours
3 s.h. Teaching Elementary School	25
3 s.h. Curriculum: Elementary School	25
Practicum	75

Description: During the final summer session, the laboratory school runs for the full six weeks 8:30-11:30 a.m. daily. The teachers are assigned to teams of 6-7 teachers and 25-30 students. When possible, the students in each team represent multi-ages--normally K-6. Multi-aged teams provide the teachers with maximum opportunities to individualize, to practice cross-age teaching, to practice peer teaching and to experiment with instructional models. It also provides the teachers with the opportunity to observe the influence of human development on instruction. The emphasis is placed upon teacher experimentation--e.g. mainstreaming indisciplinary planning, team teaching, individualized language/math labs and the use of open space. Resident faculty--the same faculty from the academic year program--conduct teaching demonstrations, provide critiques of the teaching teams, assist teams in planning and/or consult in their area of program expertise.

Between 11:30-2:00 the teachers and the faculty are engaged in large group or small group instruction or informal luncheon discussions.

The value of the integrated M.Ed. program in the field is the easy transition of theory into practice. The content and foundations blocs can be implemented directly into a curriculum and instructional design in the laboratory school. The teachers have an opportunity to test concepts of teaching in a supportive environment which, we believe, increases the likelihood of permanent professional growth.

Program Delivery

The DCE, through its regional centers, act to identify areas of the state where inservice graduate programs are most needed. The center directors, working closely with LEA representatives, conduct needs assessments to determine the community commitment to graduate study programs. Each program site requires an applicant pool of approximately 90 elementary teachers from which approximately 60 of the most qualified can be admitted to graduate study. A cohort of 60 teachers serves as the basis for academic and fiscal planning because:

- tuition revenues for a cohort of 60 teachers provides maximum flexibility for the allocation of faculty resources and the necessary logistical support.
- credit generation for each group of 15 teachers constitutes one course equivalent for planning purposes, thus instruction can be planned around one faculty with 60 teachers for lectures; two faculty for small group instruction; and/or four faculty working in seminar groups of 15.

As the administrative arm of the program, the DCE assumes responsibility for initial contacts with the prospective applicants, promotes the program through LEA contacts, collects and processes the applications for graduate admission, schedules the physical facilities for instructional sessions and assists with the logistics (cars, lodging and meals) support to the faculty.

The Department of Curriculum and Instruction (SE) establishes an off-grounds coordinator who, with the chair, prepares a two-year budget for each site of field-based graduate study. Based upon a cohort of 60 teachers, budget justifications are prepared for:

- personnel: faculty, secretarial, consultant and student services
- instructional support: reproduction, telephone, supplies
- logistical support: travel, meals and lodging

The budget is then submitted through the SE to the DCE for funding; a process very similar to the way temporary programs are funded from external sources. When the

budgetary process is complete, program area resources in the department are expended in accordance with budget specifications. The departmental chair and the off-grounds coordinator allocate resources--primarily personnel--to provide for both on-grounds and off-grounds instruction in elementary education. In a standard year, four or five program faculty will be involved in delivering the content and foundations blocs of courses at each field center. These faculty will have on-grounds responsibilities as well. One member of the faculty team is designated as center advisor. The center advisor is responsible for the maintenance of student records and processing comprehensive examinations, degree applications and certification papers.

The off-grounds coordinator and the center advisor develop a calendar of instructional meetings for the academic year. It is essential that the calendar reflect special events at the University and in the LEAs. Typically, the academic year consists of about 16 instructional meetings spaced at two/three week intervals. One instructional meeting consist of seven/eight class hours divided between Friday afternoon and Saturday morning. The interval between instructional meetings is essential to permit the teachers to plan their studies around teaching responsibilities, to conduct long-range class projects and papers and/or to practice instructional models with their students. Since the field sites are on the average more than four hours from the University grounds, the two/three week spacing of instruction was the most efficient use of faculty time.

During the academic year, the center advisor and the off-grounds coordinator plan with the LEAs for the laboratory school operated during the summer session. It is essential that the LEA administrations understand that the laboratory school will be operated in an LEA facility but under the direction of the SE program faculty. The center advisor with the help of the LEA recruits 250-300 children (grades K-6) from the surrounding communities. Control of the recruiting process is essential to the program faculty. The LEAs frequently have particular interests

in a summer school for the gifted or for Title I children, while program interests are best served by a heterogeneous population of children. Program faculty involved in academic year instruction form the administrative and instructional cadre for the laboratory school. The teachers organize the classroom and plan the curriculum/instruction under the supervision of the faculty team.

The off-grounds coordinator (SE), DCE representatives and the LEA administrators negotiate a complete budget for the summer laboratory school. The DCE budget normally provides for all instructional personnel and their support including consumable instructional supplies. The LEA typically provides electricity, custodial services and some durable instructional materials. The SE has an extensive collection of instructional materials that travel in support of the off-grounds faculty teams—science kits, math manipulables, children's books, maps and musical instruments.

The off-grounds M.Ed. degree is an intact program consisting of 30 s.h. of coursework acquired over a two year period of study. Graduate credits, although valuable background for an individual, cannot be transferred into the program. Individuals who are forced to leave the program may transfer credits out of the program at the end of the first academic year, the first summer session or the second academic year. Students who experience difficulty with a particular course segment are provided remedial opportunities to remove academic deficiencies. During the final summer session, the teachers are required to complete a three-hour comprehensive examination. Program faculty from all content blocs supply questions from which the examination is prepared. The examinations are marked by a team of faculty involved in the program. Graduates of the off-grounds program are invited to the grounds for graduation exercises.

Summary Of The Off-Grounds Experience: 1973-82

During the last ten years, the SE in cooperation with the DCE has carried out nine off-grounds M.Ed. degree programs in elementary education--two more programs are being developed for 1982-84. The geographic dispersal of the completed programs can best be represented as:

Region	Distance from Grounds (Travel Time)	Number of Program Cycles	Number of Program Graduates
Appalachia Virginia[4]	5-6 hours	4	225
Rural Southside Virginia	3-4 hours	4	234
Northern Virginia	2 hours	1	50

The new program cycles will also be located in Appalachia and Southside Virginia.

In every instance, the program faculty and the SE Bureau of Educational Research have conducted evaluations of the Off-Grounds experience. In addition, three dissertation studies have been based on some aspect of the programs--teacher abilities to assess moral stages of children, teacher attitudes toward team teaching, mainstreaming and interdisciplinary planning, and teacher skills within teaching teams. The several systems of program evaluation have taken the following forms:

- relationships between teacher objectives and their teaching activities
- classroom observations of teacher skills (repeated observations)
- ethnographic studies of the teacher's classrooms
- teacher attitudes toward instructional change and barriers to change
- teacher and administrator attitudes toward program goals (pre/post)
- teacher self-reports of program content and delivery
- comparison scores for student performances in On-Grounds and Off-Grounds classes
- performances of teachers in laboratory school settings

[4] One cycle in Appalachia was a Teacher Corps project based upon a similar design.

Longitudinal studies of changes in teacher behavior have not been possible within budgetary restraints. Nevertheless, the following conclusions are warranted from the evidence:

- faculty involved in the off-grounds program are more enthusiastic about instructional delivery in the field over that on-grounds--particularly in the case of the laboratory school.
- teacher enthusiasm increases during the program--particularly as they achieve visible success during the laboratory school sessions.
- teachers develop strong loyalties to their group and dedication to group programs.
- teacher knowledge and skills show significant improvement in each cycle, but we have no data to demonstrate the permanence of the improvement.
- LEA administrators have repeatedly requested that another cycle of graduate study be conducted in their area. In fact, three of the early program cycles were repeated at or near the same site within five years.

Finally, a word about the institutional processes involved in maintaining an active field-based program in elementary education. The SE and the DCE have successfully cooperated in keeping the Off-Grounds M.Ed. program alive and well--a situation that requires each to surrender some autonomy and to mitigate primary values. In an effort to facilitate communication between the schools, the SE has staffed a Director of Field Services who interfaces directly with the DCE. The cooperative process for Off-Grounds degree programs has not been institutionalized, however, since the rules for budget development, staffing ratios and interschool negotiations change from year to year. The lack of an institutional process for planning may be positive because it requires that everyone involved must take an active part in the planning and delivery of each new cycle of graduate study.

The most difficult barrier to inservice graduate programs can be found in the nature of faculty rewards. Clearly the faculty perceive the value--both to the profession and to their own professional development--of participation as a team member in a field-based program of graduate study. The same faculty, however,

experience considerable difficulty in perceiving how the SE and the University value their participation. Consequently, the building of an effective faculty team to work in the field is a challenge for the Off-Grounds coordinator. The response from the field, teachers and administrators, and the obvious professional growth of the faculty teams who participate in the field make the challenge exciting.

THE ACADEMIC YEAR

submitted by:

David Hayes
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The Academic Year

The center advisor has principal responsibility for coordinating the delivery of the instructional schedule. This responsibility includes several areas of interaction: a) scheduling of classes; b) delivery of classes; and c) coordination of major and minor course requirements. These areas will be described in turn.

a) Scheduling of Classes. To avoid scheduling conflicts, the center advisor interacts with both local school divisions (LEA's) and School of Education (SE) faculty members involved in the program.

In planning potential dates for weekend instruction, the center advisor secures the LEA's school calendar. In some program sites, more than one LEA is involved. Special attention is paid to school vacations and planned teacher in-service and work days. From this calendar(s), a set of potential weekend dates is derived.

The center advisor and off-grounds coordinator then match the potential weekend dates to the availablilty of faculty personnel. Three considerations are ever present in devising the actual instructional calendar. First, as much as possible successive weekends are avoided to allow the teachers to enjoy alternating free and work weekends. Second, to avoid disruption of course continuity, each major and minor course is planned for successively chosen weekends. Third, in light of other commitments, alternative dates are offered to faculty personnel.

Balancing these three considerations is no easy task, but from these concerns a master schedule is derived. In certain program cycles, the ideal is not met and course continuity becomes somewhat disrupted or teachers are scheduled to attend classes on successive weekends. A typical schedule is included in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Instructors' Schedule of Classes

Academic Year I

DATE	Class	Instructor(s)
Sept. 24	Orientation Registration	Hayes Gunter
Oct. 8-9	Curriculum	Gunter
Oct. 29-30	Human Growth	Strang
Nov. 5-6	Human Growth	Strang
Nov. 12-13	Human Growth	Richards
Dec. 3-4	Language Arts	Hayes
Dec. 17-18	Language Arts Art	Hayes McLeod
Jan. 7-8	Language Arts Art	Hayes McLeod
Jan. 21-22	Language Arts Art	Hayes McLeod
Feb. 4-5	Language Arts Art	Hayes McLeod
Feb. 18-19	Reading Children's Lit.	Hayes Crook
March 4-5	Reading Art	Hayes McLeod
March 25-26	Reading Children's Lit.	Hayes Crook
April 22-23	Reading Children's Lit.	Hayes Crook
April 29-30	Reading Children's Lit.	Hayes Crook
May 13-14	Reading Curriculum	Hayes Gunter

Snow Dates

May 6-7
May 20-21
April 15-16

b) Delivery of Classes. The center advisor coordinates with an LEA administrator to secure an acceptable facility for instruction. In some cases, classes are held at a college in the vicinity of the served geographical area. The facility needs to accomodate space for large group instruction as well as smaller rooms when the class is divided into sections. The facility must also be appropriate for art and science curriculum needs.

All instruction for the academic year is conducted on weekends. Instructors meet with students for a 3½ hour Friday and 3½ hour Saturday session each weekend. Two modes of instructional delivery are utilized in the off-grounds program. Some instructors travel to the teaching site alone and deliver instruction to the entire group on both Friday and Saturday. An instructor operating in this mode thus delivers 7 hours of instruction during the weekend.

More commonly, two instructors, each responsible for a specific course or minor course experience, travel to the site together. In these cases, students meet with both instructors on Friday and Saturday. The students are divided into two groups and each instructor delivers the same instruction to each group. A typical weekend schedule is as follows:

Friday	Instructor A	Instructor B
Teacher Group 1	4:00-5:45	5:45-7:30
Teacher Group 2	5:45-7:30	4:00-5:45
Saturday		
Teacher Group 1	8:00-9:45	9:45-11:30
Teacher Group 2	9:45-11:30	8:00-9:45

In practice, there is a short break between each teaching session. Thus, each instructor meets with the teachers for a total of 3½ hours each weekend.

A special consideration is the time for beginning classes. As the students are in-service teachers, classes on Friday are scheduled after the instructional

day. In some cases, teachers must travel relatively long distances between teaching assignment site and program instructional site. Thus, in some areas, classes begin as late as 4:15 and meet until 7:45. Certainly, many of the students become weary after a full day of teaching and a few hours of instruction. Instructors usually plan their instruction to accommodate this human condition.

c) Coordination of Major and Minor Course Requirements. Besides the hours of course credit earned each academic year, students receive instruction in minor course experiences which do not, of themselves, constitute a credit hour(s) course. For example, the Language Content bloc of the first academic year includes 3 credit hours each of Language Arts in the Elementary School and Foundations of Reading Instruction as well as minor course experience (no credit hours) for Children's Literature and Art in the Elementary School.

Assignments given by instructors for the two minor course experiences are woven into the grading structure of the other two courses in various ways. Commonly, each will count 20% of each credit course grade of a combined 40% of each course grade. Alternatively, Children's Literature counts 40% of the Reading grade and Art 40% of the Language Arts grade.

A similar structure is followed for the Content Bloc of the second academic year with Music and Social Studies comprising the minor course experiences and Science and Math credit courses.

Further, requirements for minor course experience in Curriculum Fundamentals are applied toward grades given during the Summer Sessions.

Students enrolled in the program are given a complete outline of the grading structure at the beginning of each academic year to avoid confusion.